Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A handle and latch mechanism for a patch panel and U-link system, comprising:

a plunging and rotating rod attached to ~~the~~ a U-link element of the ~~patch panel and~~ U-link system;

a latch finger at a first end of said rod;

a handle for grasping the U-link at a second end of said rod;

a guide mechanism to constrain ~~the~~ a motion of said rod to a path parallel to ~~the~~ an axis of a first end section of the U-link substantially orthogonal to the patch panel; ~~and~~

a catch fitting attached to the patch panel into which said latch finger inserts;

a stop affixed to said rod; and

a spring bearing against said stop at a first end of said spring.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, further comprising a second end of said spring, bearing against a face of said guide mechanism to urge said rod to plunge away from the patch panel.

4. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, further comprising a support affixed to the U-link in such orientation as to permit attachment of said guide mechanism thereon.

5. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, further comprising an

aperture in said guide mechanism affording constraint to ~~the motion~~ a motional axis of said rod.

6. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, further comprising a bearing face on said guide mechanism against which said spring rests.

7. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 6, further comprising a thrust washer interposed between said spring and said bearing face on said guide mechanism.

8. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said guide mechanism further comprises a first fitting and a second fitting.

9. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 8, wherein said first fitting of said guide mechanism has a first arcuate slot admitting said rod and said second fitting of said guide mechanism has a second arcuate slot admitting said rod.

10. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim [[8]] 9, wherein said first and second arcuate slots admitting said rod into said first fitting and said second fitting are formed into closed passages for confinement of said rod.

11. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim [[8]] 9, wherein said first and second arcuate slots admitting said rod into said first fitting and said second fitting are formed into closed passages for confinement of said rod by pins bridging ~~the~~ open ends of the slots thereof.

12. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim [[8]] 9, wherein said first and second arcuate slots admitting said rod into said first fitting and said second fitting are formed into closed passages for confinement of said rod by screws bridging the open ends of the slots thereof.

13. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 8, further comprising a first hole passing through said first fitting concentric with the motional axis of said rod and a second hole passing through said second fitting concentric with the motional axis of said rod.

14. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said guide mechanism further comprises a single integral unit attached to the U-link, said guide mechanism guiding said rod and providing a bearing surface for ~~the proximal~~ said second end of said spring.

15. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said spring is a helical coil spring positioned with [[the]] an axis of [[the]] a helix thereof substantially coaxial with said rod.

16. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said handle is formed from ~~the material of~~ said rod by bending [[the]] said second end of said rod ~~distal to the patch panel~~ into a ~~substantially symmetrical open centered~~ handle of size proportional to human hands and further proportional to [[the]] a weight of said U-link to be carried therewith.

17. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said handle is formed from ~~the material of~~ said rod by bending [[the]] said second end of said rod ~~distal to the patch panel~~ with a single, substantially right-angle bend leaving a section of rod beyond the bend as a handle proportional to human hands and further proportional to a weight of the U-link to be carried therewith.

18. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said catch fitting attaches to the patch panel with a bolt.

19. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said catch fitting restrains

the latch finger from rotation with a detent.

20. (Original) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 1, wherein said catch fitting has a bevel on a surface distal to the patch panel.

21. (Currently Amended) A handle and latch mechanism for a mated patch panel and U-link, system comprising:

means for urging [[the]] a U-link into contact with [[the]] a patch panel;

means for latching the U-link to the patch panel;

means for releasing the U-link from contact with the patch panel; ~~and~~

means for gripping the U-link without changing hand placement from that required for latching and releasing the U-link;

means for stopping the means for latching when engaged with the patch panel; and

means for springing against said stopping means.

22. (Currently Amended) The handle and latch mechanism of claim 21, further comprising means for accommodating a ~~multiplicity of U-link orientations~~ plurality of angular orientations for the U-link to mate on a patch panel ~~characterized by a multiplicity~~ having a plurality of U-link-accepting ports.

23. (Currently Amended) A method for attaching~~, holding,~~ and releasing a ~~signal path linking~~ signal-path-linking component from a radio frequency signal path, comprising:

providing a signal path for a radio frequency signal having an interruption coaxially terminated at both ends of the interruption;

grasping handles on a linking component and urging the linking component into a position ~~where it can~~ to complete ~~a portion of a~~ the signal path at both ends of the interruption;

~~latching~~ attaching the linking component for ~~indefinite~~ situation at [[the]] a location where urged by a single motion of rotating and axially plunging the handles on the linking component to engage a catch fitting; and

reversibly releasing the linking component from the latched condition by a single motion of rotating and axially withdrawing the handles on the linking component to disengage from the catch fitting~~; and~~

~~grasping the linking component for disassembly and transport~~.